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first suggestion is that affairs common to the interests of the several American states ought to be discussed and settled by a body in which the South American republics are accorded full representation. Second, that the European colonies in the southern continent and Central America should have their freedom either through grant or by purchase by the United States. Finally, the United States must withdraw from the Philippines. Although these islands are rich in resources and are located at the doorway of the orient they are an embarrassment. In times of peace they present serious problems in the civilization and government of the native population; in times of war they must either be defended — an expensive and troublesome task — or evacuated, which would be humiliating. Were the Philippines to be traded for the European colonies in the western hemisphere a long step toward world peace would be taken. The Monroe doctrine would be restored to the position it occupied before the Spanish-American war, the suspicion of Japan would be allayed, and the east would be left to those nations most vitally interested in it and best equipped to solve the problems arising from the administration of colonial dependencies. With South America, Central America, and the West Indies free from European control reorganization could take place with the aid of the United States. The Guianas, Venezuela, Colombia, and Ecuador, more or less closely united physiographically, might be induced to form a confederacy; Argentina, Chili, Bolivia, Paraguay, and Uruguay could do the same since their interests are identical; and although the West Indies would remain in the possession of the United States the Central American states might find it to their advantage to unite into some sort of a league.

Not many years ago these suggestions had a place only in the realm of possibility but today they may well be called probabilities. The United States will be represented at the conference which makes the world peace and this nation can make a solid contribution to the welfare of the western hemisphere and at the same time aid in securing the peace of the world by urging the program advanced by Mr. Sherrill. At no time in the world's history will our allies be more inclined to favor such proposals. Moreover, if the plan already hinted at in German circles of an alliance with Russia and Japan matures, it is imperative that the United States unify the western hemisphere or be prepared to abandon the doctrine of "entangling alliances with none."

WILLIAM V. POOLEY

History of the presidency. By Edward Stanwood, Litt.D. (Bowdoin).

In two volumes. Volume one, History of the presidency from 1788 to 1897. Volume two, History of the presidency from 1897 to 1916.

(Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin company, 1916. 586 p.; 396 p. \$4.50 net)

The first volume of this set is the well-known work carrying the presidential narrative down to the inauguration of President McKinley in 1897. It is again submitted in the original form, without an attempt at revision. Comment is therefore unnecessary except by way of regret that the author did not see fit to incorporate the results of recent historical discoveries, whether in the field of acquisition of new materials or in the realm of historical interpretation.

Volume II continues the discussion to the inauguration of Wilson and Marshall in 1913 and closes with an analysis, in a chapter of thirty-five pages, of the evolution of the presidency. One prominent difference between the two volumes is the difference in space available for the consideration of a single presidential administration. The first volume covers twenty-seven administrations in thirty chapters averaging less than twenty pages; the second volume has three hundred pages for a period of sixteen years in which governmental affairs were directed by but three different executives. In content it appears less a history of the presidency and more a general treatise of the political narrative of the period, more perhaps a history of presidential elections. Issues had become more complicated, new independent parties were in the field, some with indications of an increasing element of permanence, and party platforms came to include more and more planks; all these factors combined to make the change mentioned more or less inevitable. There is, therefore, too little opportunity to suggest the significance of a given policy or act. One wishes, for instance, that the author had submitted more data to make clear President McKinley's desire to avoid war with Spain in the spring of 1897. More use might have been made generally of the executive messages and state papers; the work also reflects the difficulty common to all writing of contemporary history, namely, that of securing access to the more private and intimate kinds of source material such as will be absolutely necessary to an adequate understanding of the field surveyed. The author contents himself with the platforms of parties whereas the future historian will look for private correspondence, diaries, and such materials of a confidential sort. The attempt was made to make the volume more useful in the campaign of 1916 by printing in an appendix the platforms and candidates of the various parties that were in the field.

The most noteworthy sections of the volume are the chapter on "The era of 'progressive' insurgency," in which considerable insight into the forces at work in the pre-convention portion of the campaign of 1912 is displayed, and the interpretative analysis of the "Evolution of the pres-

idency." The latter is by no means the contribution that might well be expected from a veteran author of such broad experience in historical writing but it serves the purpose of drawing together the scattered narrative items into a synthetic whole.

ARTHUR C. COLE

History and procedure of the house of representatives. By De Alva Stanwood Alexander, A.M., LL.D. (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin company, 1916. 435 p. \$2.00 net)

Mr. Alexander has written a book that is both useful and interesting. He has done more than present a technical account of the organization and rules of the house of representatives. He has also supplemented the formal facts with illustrative incidents and personal characteristics of speakers, floor leaders, and other prominent members of the house; and has presented this material in an attractive literary form.

The subject is treated in an analytical rather than a chronological arrangement; and the historical discussion appears in connection with each topic. This method has the effect of separating incidents closely related in time, and of taking up some recent events before others which serve to explain what came later.

In the chapter on the roll of members elect, the influence of the clerk of the former house over the organization of a new house with a close party division in 1839 and 1855 are set forth. The narrow margin in the present congress should arouse interest in these earlier contests.

A good deal of attention is naturally given to the power of the speaker and the rules of the house, including the exciting incidents connected with counting a quorum, the adoption of the "Reed rules," and the more recent changes. Mr. Alexander does not hesitate to express his approval of the changes brought about by Speaker Reed, in the interest of dispatching business; and while he admits that some of the more recent changes are useful or at most harmless, he considers the new methods of appointing committees a failure, and favors restoring this power to the speaker.

In taking this position, the author fails to recognize that the responsibility for directing the work of the house according to the wishes of the majority may be concentrated in the floor leader, without incurring the risk of unfair treatment to the minority when these powers were added to those of the presiding officer.

The disintegration of the control over finances by the distribution of authority among various committees is well told; and it is of interest to note that Mr. Reed aided actively in this movement some years before he took up the opposite task of centralizing control in the hands of the